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## **Sen. Van Woerkom's bill to define cars as litter passes Senate**

**LANSING** – The definition of litter would be expanded to include abandoned vehicles through a bill passed by the Senate today, said Sen. Gerald Van Woerkom, R-Norton Shores.

“Abandoned vehicles can cause accidents and place the burden of their disposal on towing companies and local communities,” said Van Woerkom, the bill’s sponsor. “Cars should be considered as litter, and should be cleaned up from our roads, fields and forests.”

Senate Bill 1171 would amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to define vehicles that are considered abandoned as litter.

“This is a bill that should have been passed a long time ago,” said Fred Baxter, owner of Baxter Towing in Muskegon. “It will provide a deterrent to individuals not to abandon their vehicles in our roads – leaving others to pay for their disposal. Towing companies do not make money from abandoned cars, which sometime contain hazardous materials. The bill will go a long way in helping towing companies out.”

Under the Michigan Vehicle Code, vehicles are considered abandoned when they remain on public property or private property for a period of 48 hours, after a police agency or other governmental agency designated by the police agency has affixed a written notice to the vehicle.

“Senate Bill 1171 will be a tremendous help in addressing one of the state’s biggest problems – abandoned vehicles,” said Bill Byers, president of the Michigan Towing Association. “Abandoned vehicles cause accidents, tie-up the time of law enforcement officials, and cost towing companies time and money. I look forward to the passage of this bill.”

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